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ABSTRACT

Grant monies are available from a variety of sources and many grants go unused year after year. Teachers need to be alerted and informed about how to look for potential funds and/or available services for inservice teacher education, what sources to seek out, how to put the information in the right hands, and then how to seek out those who can help them with the paperwork required by funding agencies. Funding long-term inservice teacher education programs requires perseverance, but long-term programs are what teachers need, rather than quick workshops. Grant seekers can help each other, as well, because participating in a successful program brings publicity, which will lead to connections with others and information about new sources of funding. These connections are the most important factor in maintaining funding for long-term projects, because they can lead to expansion and permanent sources of funds. Other characteristics of successful inservice training programs are the following: (1) long range goals; (2) release days for teachers during the school year; (3) intensive summer training and follow-up visits on a regular basis; (4) monitoring; and (5) evaluation. Seven references are included. (A list of sources of possible grants available to teachers, locations of college board regional offices, a description of the publication "Educational Programs that Work," and a list of National Diffusion Network Facilitators are appended.) (SKC)

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TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN IN-SERVICE AND EFFECTIVE TEACHER TRAINING

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1987 Convention of The National Council of Teachers of English
Los Angeles, California

Session B-9
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TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN IN-SERVICE AND EFFECTIVE TEACHER TRAINING

Consider: EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH! Consider: "The purpose of this project ... is to promote teaching excellence in English." Consider: "...work in collaboration with a local college or university." Consider: "...on-site visits, a three-week summer institute to study core texts," and finally, consider: "workshops for school and college faculty" (Humanities in the Schools: Programs for Teachers and Administrators, 6).

This brief amount of information was the start of something big--CONNECTING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS TO APPROPRIATE PARTICIPANTS. I responded to this "call for proposals" by picking up my phone and dialing the area code 404 number in Atlanta, Georgia, which was answered quickly by a voice announcing "This is the National Humanities Faculty." We came to know them not only as the NHF, but also as individuals committed to providing many opportunities for improving education in many fields. The events following that moment are now history, and I can honestly say that that was a phone call which changed and improved English education for thousands of students in Northside Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas, and which enriched and uplifted the teaching of dozens of teachers who benefitted from training, study, workshops, seminars, symposia, and ultimately, curricular results--and we were just one of the ten projects from all over the United States. (See "Creating an Environment for Change," English Education, Vol. 17, No. 1, Feb.'85, 32-34.)

Grant monies are available from a variety of sources, and many grants go unused year after year--I have discovered since receiving that first NHF service grant. Northside School District has received a second grant just this year from NHF: two Apple IIe computers with printer and software. As one NEH advisor told me, "Grants beget grants!"

Teachers--not just administrators--need to be alerted and informed of how to look for potential funds and/or services available, from what sources, how to put the information in the right hands, and then how to seek out those who can (and will) persevere, prepare, then produce the preponderance of paperwork required by most funding agencies. The paperwork is not fun, but in retrospect, we discovered much of ourselves we knew not of. (I was reminded of Shakespeare's Cassius as he approached Brutus to tell him things about himself which he "knew not of" and to urge him to join the conspirators, who may not have been too dissimilar from grant proposal writers today.)

Let me say also that grant proposals bear no similarity to the Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes, where all you have to do is fill in your name, send in the coupons, then wait until someone else's name is announced some months later on the evening news, whereupon you sigh, regret all those subscriptions you ordered,

then prepare to send in the same stuff next year!

Most proposals require the proposee(s) to provide extensive information including demographic statistics, facts and figures which (may) seem hardly relevant (but they are), statements of goals and objectives, projections of desired results, and rationales of why, indeed the proposee(s) think they should receive the grant being offered. All these items demand a great deal of introspection, and no individual teacher, department, campus, or district could emerge from such inquiry without beneficial self-discovery.

The secret of a successful long term program with teachers teaching teachers is structure and longevity. The day of quick-fix three hour band-aid workshops to "train teachers" is gone forever. Instead of high-powered highly paid outside consultants who love the "little dab will do you" approach, we have discovered that master teachers--low-keyed, accessible, available fellow teachers--along with colleagues from public and private schools, from colleges and universities, and from other local resources are able to achieve the best results.

Why? Simple--because we build in long-term on-going follow-up training, monitoring, and evaluating, and because we are on the scene daily to plug up holes, to provide aid and assistance, and to zero in on potential problems before they become major matters. I don't deny the joy of the short term effects, either. I love to see and hear teachers with renewed vigor for teaching their chosen subject because of exciting and enriching academic training.

Publicity is another fringe benefit of participating in grants on any level. Whether local, state, or national, all funding agencies have a person or department for public relations--they want the public to know what they are doing with their money. So once again, the teachers, the students, the administrations, the parents, and the entire community benefit from positive reports in neighborhood, city, state, and national publications.

The successful completion of the NHF grant led me to search out other programs with proven records of accomplishment, and I have been able to find several of different types. Not all desirable programs will be free; some may require matching funds while others may call for materials and training which districts must purchase and pay for. No matter, I now constantly seek to connect the best teachers with the best programs I can locate--<u>programs that work.</u>

The topic of training teachers to teach writing to students was

becoming a high priority for us during the ETE project. We knew we had the need, and we decried the lack of substantial, sequential, long-term training available. I began to search and seek out what information I could to bring such a training program to my district. Connections happened again: I was asked to serve on a local task force to bring James Gray from the University of California at Berkeley, the home of the Bay Area Writing Project, to San Antonio to help us start a writing project, and voila! We started a national writing project.

However, a project of this type in a community of over a million population with more than fifteen local school districts within the city itself can only serve so many each year, right? Right! Since we could send just four teachers each summer to the project, and I supervise over 250 English teachers in my district alone, I could see that we couldn't wait over half a century to provide training. Realizing that writing projects are so successful wherever they are established, I knew that in my school district with more than 2,500 teachers serving over 45,000 students, we would have to have a writing project of our own! (See also in English Education, Feb.'85, Mark Goldberg's article, "Inservice Guidelines.")

Enter Joyce Armstrong Carroll, Edward E. Wilson, and the New Jersey Writing Project (NJWP) in Texas. My Texas school board and administrators had a bit of a hard time at first with this "New Jersey" appellation, but I investigated (the NJWP), inquired (of colleagues already involved), invited (Carroll and Wilson to visit Northside), then informed (my director) that I had found a "program that works" which had the validation of the National Diffusion Network to prove it (Educational Programs That Work, Edition 12, National Diffusion Network, 1986, D-3).

Common characteristics of "programs that work" are long range goals, release days for teachers during the school year, intensive (three-week) summer training conducted by well-trained specialists, follow-up visits on a regular basis, monitoring, and evaluation. The New Jersey Writing Project in Texas provides all these elements, due to the wisdom and far-sightedness of its founder, Janet Emig of Rutgers University (Carroll, "Process Into Product," in Beach & Bridwell, 1984, 315).

Under the tutelage and guidance of Carroll and Wilson, we have now trained over 150 teachers of grades K-12, have four fully certified trainers of our own who (1) took the institute, (2) implemented the writing process in their classrooms the next year, (3) went through intensive study and training through the NJWP the third year, and (4) conducted our own 3-week institute this (the 4th) year. The WRITING INSTITUTE OF NORTHSIDE (WIN) has grown

from the one 1985 summer institute to two institutes in 1987, and we are planning to offer the institute three times in the summer of 1988. We are also currently designing a model for a summer opportunity for kids to write, share, and publish their works as an adjunct to WIN, and we think we'll call it KIDS WIN!

Through active participation in both the Texas Joint Council of Teachers of English and the National Council of Teachers of English, I have met many people with much expertise and wide experience who have led me to discover other long-term high-goal solid-results programs to connect to Northside teachers. Neil J. Vale's and Joseph F. Papenfuss's Daily Oral Language program is a strong sequential skill-building approach to presenting mechanics/usage problems for students to solve every day of the school year. The result is already apparent: students are actually recognizing and correcting non-standard usage both in daily presentations and on tests! We implemented grades 6-9 in 1986-87, grades 1-5 this year, and are eagerly awaiting the completion of the program for grades 10-12. Teachers like it because it is quick (ten minutes a day), students like it because it "isn't boring like that old grammar stuff," administrators like it because it is an introductory activity or a sponge activity or even an activity for closure, and parents like it because it reminds them of "the good old days when they used to really teach us what we needed." (D.O.L. Publications, Inc., 1001 Kingston Ave., Racine, Wisconsin 53402) (Note: Neil & Joe, I'm going to start charging you an agent's fee just for the state of Texas PLUS this free publicity!)

Another connection: Three Northside teachers were selected as summer fellows for an NEH summer humanities institute at Southwest Texas State University last summer--four rigorous weeks with lots of reading, writing, listening, thinking, and speaking, with room and board, more than 15 texts, and a handsome stipend for the privilege of attending! I participated as a member of the core faculty--an opportunity I do not think would have been offered to me if I had not had the prior experience with the NHF and if I had not been active in my professional organizations in addition to my regular teaching and supervisory experience.

Finally, don't forget state and local sources for grants. State departments of education, private foundations, state commissions or committees for the humanities are all potential partners for educators seeking to improve instruction and enhance education. In San Antonio we were fortunate enough to receive a long term bequest from a private estate, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation, which in conjunction with the College Board's Advanced Placement Programs provided for five years of summer seminars with stipends for teachers and supply money for the campuses of the

teachers to implement high quality AP classes in all content areas: English, math, science, and social studies.

For the future, I shall continue to be on the alert for any kind of financial, academic, curricular, or other opportunities to connect teachers to programs which will, in the long run, accomplish the goal we all have: To provide the best possible education for the most students.

What better way to improve instruction, raise teacher morale, and increase student learning than TO CONNECT THE RIGHT TEACHERS TO THE RIGHT PROGRAMS FOR BETTER IN-SERVICE AND MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHER TRAINING?

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nota bene: As I have been working on this paper, another connection has begun to manifest--John Paskus from the National Faculty in Atlanta has called me to invite Northside Independent School District to participate in the pursuit of yet another grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities! This one will be for the history department, but I know, and John says that I'll be in line and eligible for another opportunity for English teachers before too long. "Making Connections" has become a very real part of my job description, and I shall continue to try to forge more links in the chain which will connect the teachers I work with to the best possible programs.

References

Carroll, Joyce Armstrong, "Process Into Product," New Directions in Composition Research, Beach & Bridwell, eds., The Guilford Press: New York, 1984, pp. 315-333.

College Board Regional Offices for The Advanced Placement Program of The College Entrance Examination Board, College Board Publications, Box 2815, Princeton, NJ 08540.

Educational Programs That Work, Edition 12, National Diffusion Network, Washington, D. C., 1986.

Goldberg, Mark F., "Inservice Guidelines: Some Implications from Exemplary Composition Programs," English Education, Vol.17, No.1, Feb.'85, pp. 35-38, National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Ill 61801.

Gray, Patricia S., "Creating An Environment For Change," English Education, Vol.17, No.1, Feb.'85, pp. 32-34, National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Ill 61801.

Humanities In The Schools: Programs For Teachers and Administrators, National Endowment for the Humanities Division of Fellowships and Seminars, Room 316-SSST-P, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D. C. 20506 (202)786-0463.

Vale, Neil J. and Joseph F. Papenfuss, Daily Oral Language, Grades 1-9, D.O.L. Publications, Inc., 1001 Kingston Ave., Racine, Wisconsin 53402.

SOURCES OF POSSIBLE GRANTS AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS

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Room 316-SSST-P
1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D. C. 20506
(202)786-0463

NATIONAL FACULTY (Formerly National Humanities Faculty)
1676 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30322
(404)727-5788

THE NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT
%James Gray and The Bay Area Writing Project, Dept. of Education
University of California
Berkley, CA 94720

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
Information on All National Writing Projects
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Ill 61801

Your local or state Council of Teachers of English

NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK
Recognition Division
U. S. Department of Education
1200 19th Street NW, Room 714-F
Washington, D. C. 20208
(202)653-7003 or 653-7006

-OR- Contact the NDN FACILITATOR FOR YOUR STATE THROUGH YOUR STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Commissions or Committees on the Humanities

The College Entrance Examination Board
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